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MISSIONS IN INDIA

Religious Education of Unbelievers

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THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF UNBELIEVERS.

Missions in India.

THE

Religious Education of Unbelievers.

SEVEN LETTERS

BY THE LATE

RIGHT REV. HENRY DOUGLAS, D.D.,

BISHOP OF BOMBAY.

WITH PREFACE

BY THE REV. E. S. TALBOT, M.A.,

Warden of Keble College, Oxford.

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PREFACE.

A LAYMAN, whose published writing has proved his ability and right to deal with the subject,[1] has asked me to set a few words of Preface at the head of these letters.[2] I am not qualified to do this by familiarity with the subject: and the name of the author of the letters would seem to make it almost needless that it should be done, were it not that their publication without comment might be construed into a hostile attack upon the working of Societies who have earned undying honour by their bold and patient pioneering in the Indian Mission field. It is well, therefore, that some one should extract and replace at the head of the letters the Bishop's own words (p. 5.): "If we criticize, we criticize in sympathy, and because we heartily desire the object which they have in view:" and on his behalf should beg even those whose own methods of work are touched by his frank and outspoken criticism to say whether every page of the following letters does not prove that the motive which prompts them is as far as possible from being one of a polemical kind. The danger which he apprehends to certain great principles of

[1] See a pamphlet entitled *Missions in India*, by Lieut.-General Tremenheere, C.B., London, Henry S. King and Co., 1876.

[2] Published originally, without the Bishop's name, in a Church periodical at Calcutta in 1872.

faith and reverence, and, in a less degree, the injury to the work of Missions which their violation must entail, wholly occupy his mind. If the letters are written in controversy, it is controversy of that wholesome and lawful kind which consists in the calm and solemn appeal for an investigation, or a re-investigation, of the bearing which acknowledged principles of Christian faith have upon a particular branch of the Church's practical and administrative work. To my own mind the Bishop's argument commends itself as entirely conclusive. But if it were to be proved that he was mistaken, a discussion of such a character on a subject of such importance cannot fail to be a gain: it cannot fail to quicken in all who follow it, or take part in it on either side, that sense of the vital connection between the work before us and the faith in which it is to be done, which the most devoted worker, in the midst of the detail and routine of work, finds it hard to preserve.

I have said thus much in regard to the object with which these letters were written by the Bishop and are now published. I should like to add a word about the effect which the arguments here urged ought to have upon the estimate formed of the past history of Christian Missions. For they constitute a grave case undoubtedly against a large side of the work of those Missions. And therefore their publication touches us all. And it would be futile to hope that the blame, whatever it be, which has been incurred in any department of that work will not in great measure attach itself to the whole cause. No exact distinctions between the work of the Church and that of the Societies within her, or between one group of Christians and another, can prevent this from being so at least in the sight of men, but probably to some

extent in the sight of God also. The common Faith, the Church, all its members, these all will bear the reproach of the errors of Christian work by whomsoever committed, and their strength will be proportionately weakened. I should hold it foolish to take any part in such a publication as these letters, and not to regard oneself as taking thereby the attitude of confession at least as much as that of criticism. And therefore I am the more anxious, while confessing Christian mistakes, to point out the witness which these very mistakes bear indirectly to the greatness of Christian work. We may own that there have been faults—even grave faults—in the Church's work, yet there is something of nobility even in her faults. She has erred; but so to err is only given to what is noble. The large-mindedness which has confidently assumed that the spread of knowledge must ultimately minister to the witness of Christ: the large-heartedness which has lavished this education on Christians and heathens without asking questions: the patience to work for the future without visible present result with which our missionaries have gone on year after year, maintaining these mixed schools with a merely nominal amount of encouragement in the shape of conversions among their scholars, and with which during all that time, diverting to these schools large sums which a "narrow-minded" view of the Church's work would certainly have insisted on spending upon purely "religious" machinery, —surely these are qualities which, rightly guided, may accomplish great things; surely they are qualities which ought specially to conciliate the respect and sympathy of Englishmen.

It must be our prayer that God would enable our Church to employ these qualities in the future for His glory with

maturer strength and wisdom, and with a fuller organisation, in which the various gifts of her many members, and of the differing schools within her pale, may be combined by the Lord the Spirit from whom they come into the wealth and power of a many-sided and harmonious work.

Is it not at least a lawful and pious hope that for such a result the prayers of him who, out of his zeal and care for the cause of his Master, wrote these words on earth, are continually offered in Paradise, and heard?

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF UNBELIEVERS.

LETTER I.

The prevailing mode of teaching unbelievers is not in accordance with our Lord's example—Inquiry as to the principles which teachers should observe—Our Lord's practice—Truth is offensive to fallen man—Habits of obedience are generally necessary to its reception—Was only gradually and partially received by the Apostles—Even they were taught by parables—Much more was this so in the case of unbelievers—Truth was put in its simplest forms—In our missions it is administered to unbelievers irrespective of any inclination on their part to receive it—Injurious consequences.

INTERESTED as we are in the conversion of the people of India and the foundation of our Lord's kingdom in this land, we confess to an opinion that there is a good deal in the method of bringing truth before unbelievers, as characterizing the practice of Indian missionaries, which seems to us not to be in accordance with our Lord's example, however sincere may be the desire, as we believe it to be, to tread in His steps. It will be our object, therefore, to lay down certain principles which, as it seems to us, should be present to the mind of the Christian teacher when he is endeavouring to introduce into the minds of unbelievers the light of that truth which has been given to the world by Jesus Christ. These principles we shall not deduce from any *a priori* considerations of the nature of

truth, or of the mind which is to receive it, but from the words and conduct of the Truth Himself, when He appeared in the world as the revealer of the mind of God to man. He knew what truth is as no one else can know it, and what is in man as no one else can know man. His way, therefore, of bringing man and truth together must be the best of all ways—the way for men of all ages and of every clime and place.

First, then, it is to be recollected that truth is naturally unwelcome, or even offensive, to the mind of man as a fallen being. This is especially the case with moral and spiritual truth, but to a certain extent it is the case in the most general way. Men naturally judge by sense and mere appearance; by what *seems*, rather than by that which *is;* by habit, by wish, by inclination, rather than by reason and conscience, which are controlled by rule and law. Sin, which is a perversion of the moral nature, is accompanied by an aberration of the intellect; and aversion to that which is true is the consequence of departure from that which is right. Hence we may gauge a man's love of truth, knowledge of truth, capacity of imbibing truth, by the state of his will and conscience: for he can hold truth with his mind only in proportion to the goodness of his life. Every sin which is in him makes a leak in that vessel which is his intellect, through which truth runs out; and he can receive truth and retain it only by stopping up these leaks through the insertion of contrary habits of virtue, and by practical obedience to the will of God.

It follows from this that truth, when first it comes before men as a new thing, must wear an aspect of strangeness. Men alienated from God in life can only be aliens from God's truth, and truth must seem strange to them; not because there is anything in truth which should set their minds against it, for, on the contrary, their minds, if in a right state, fit to it and are fitted to hold it; but because they are familiar with its opposite and strange to itself. Truth is naturally strange to men because men are naturally estranged from truth; and it is only

as men become accustomed to it, and enter into its secrets by familiar and affectionate intercourse with it, that the strangeness wears away, and they are drawn to it and held willing captives by it. Even our Lord's apostles, chosen as they were to be His friends and representatives, were naturally so averse to the higher truths of His doctrine, that, almost at the close of His earthly ministry, He was obliged to treat them as weak bottles which could not stand the inner fermentation of those higher truths which He had come to reveal. "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." They had not the moral strength which could bear the fulness of His revelations. If He had laid on them the weight of all which He came to make known, their characters, promising though they were, and capable of growing into almost superhuman strength, would have broken down beneath a load which then would have been overwhelming to them. Much He had taught them—His own perfect Divinity; His triumph by means of death; His return as Judge of man; Regeneration through water and the Spirit Whom He would send; the gift of His own Body and Blood as the means of life and union with Him;—mysteries such as these He had shown to them, and though they had not been able fully to enter into them, they had so far borne them as to admit them to their minds as truths on which they should ponder until they saw all that was involved in them. But these things, not in proverbs and somewhat enigmatic sayings, but in their plainness; these things in connection with all the other mysteries of the kingdom of God; with the universality of redemption which was so great a stumbling-block even to men so full of insight and love of truth as the apostle Peter; with the nature of the Church as His mystical Body, His kingdom actually set up on earth, the fulness of Him who fills all in all; with the powers and functions of the ministry, as representing Him on earth and exercising powers essentially His though delegated; with the gift of the Blessed Spirit to dwell in man's soul and body,

and to give and maintain that supernatural divine life which Sacraments impart as means of living union with Christ: all, in fact, which goes to make up that whole religious system which is brought before us, genetically and rudimentally, in the Acts and the Epistles,—this was not only beyond their comprehension at this time, but was so alien to their present state of mind and feeling, that they would now turn from it as weak eyes from a strong light, or a sickly stomach from food which would be wholesome to it in its strength. He could speak of these things indeed in parables or parabolic sayings even now, because men can bear truth in figure when they cannot bear it in its plainness, but He could hardly yet show the very naked truth itself. For that He must wait until the forty days of His resurrection, when their minds would open in the presence of that new life which they would see, and when He would speak to them of the "things pertaining to the kingdom of God," as men who could then receive His teaching. He must wait even beyond that intervening period until the day of Pentecost when the Comforter would descend from on high to be God within them. Then they would be able to receive the many mysteries of the kingdom, looking at the Sun of truth with eyes which had been trained to see its dazzling brightness.

Such, then, was our Lord's method as a teacher even with His chosen followers; He taught them the truth as they could bear it. Such, too, was still more His method with the unbelievers: He spoke to them "as they were able to hear it." He recognized, that is to say, the natural alienation of man from truth, and He taught truth in such ways as were consistent with that alienation. He did not give strong meat to those who were still infants, much less to those who were not born again and were in a state of active opposition to Him; but He treated each according to actual mental condition and moral state. In the case of those who were in unbelief, He put truth before them in its simplest and most rudimentary forms to test their readiness to taste it. If they tasted it, He

let them have it. If, having tasted it, they showed such an appetite as indicated the beginnings of life, He treated them as "new born babes," who could be fed on pure milk. From milk, when that had become assimilated to the system so as to produce growth, He went on to meat, and from meat to strong meat in those whose spiritual senses were fully exercised to discern both good and evil.

And now we ask, is this the method in our Indian Missions? We are afraid that in many cases it is not; we are afraid that truth is often not put before men as they are able to bear it; but rather that it is often put before all, whether they wish for it or not, as if truth and the unbelieving mind were correlatives; or perhaps, we should rather say, that our religious physicians administer truth to unbelievers as medicine is given to children when they are reluctant to receive it. If a child is ill, we say that he must have the necessary remedy, whether he will or not; get the medicine down and the child will derive good from it; the child's will has nothing to do with the matter; remedies work by laws of matter, not by laws of spirit. Now, do not our missionary physicians often act towards unbelievers in much the same way? We would not wrong them, and if we criticise, we criticise in sympathy, and because we heartily desire the object which they have in view. But do they not often treat spiritual truth as if it was a physical medicine? and do they not often treat the minds of unbelievers as if they were subject to merely physical laws? At any rate we maintain that the mind and truth can be brought together only by the concurrence of the heart and will; and we point out that our great example always proportioned His teaching to the sympathy of the minds which were before Him. We say, too, that if this is not done, and if the alienation of the natural mind is overlooked, the chances of working conviction are destroyed. It is not only that we do not succeed when we attempt that which is unnatural and therefore impossible, but we destroy our very conditions of success. If you put

upon a child a load which only a full-grown man can carry, not only do you fail to get the load carried by him, but you render it impossible that he shall carry that load when he becomes a full-grown man. You break him down prematurely, you cripple him for life, you crush and annihilate those powers which time would gradually have developed. Attempting the impossible, you do not accomplish that which might in time have been achieved. So, too, if you operate upon a man for a cataract, and shut him up in a darkness which you gradually remove, in a few weeks he will be fit to look upon the light of day; but if you remove the film which covered his eyes and suddenly let in the sun upon him, the very faculty of sight will depart, and the eye itself will become darkness, killed by excess of light. Our Lord's method was of another kind. He taught truth as men could bear it. He veiled it while He showed it, hoping that the sons of truth would lift up the veil, as they could bear to look upon the glory of the mysteries of God.

LETTER II.

Spiritual truth can be discerned only by means of the Spirit of God, which is Christ's greatest gift to those in a state of grace—Even the heathen receive some influences of the Spirit that they may feel after the truth —The nature of the Holy Spirit's influences a guiding, not a compelling force—Man's will must co-operate—Unbelievers cannot be taught by the same methods as believers.

TRUTH must be taught as men are able to bear it; it cannot be taught unless there is a will to receive it, and only gradually when that will is found. For the mind of man moves slowly; by steps, not by bounds and still less by flights; learning like a child first to stand, then to walk, then to run, and then last of all to leap, and each stage is necessary to that which follows it. This we have seen already; and now we go on to state that spiritual truth can be discerned only by means of the Spirit of God. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."

Every kind of Truth, is acquired by a faculty corresponding to itself. That we may learn truth of the intellect we must have gifts of intellect, powers of acquisition, of memory, of deduction, of analysis, of comparison, and so forth. That we may range through that ideal world in which poets have their habitation, and see those things which poets see, we must have some measure of the poetic faculty, something of feeling, fancy, and imagination. That we may know moral truth, we must have, as even the heathen philosophers of Greece perceived, that moral vision which is given by obedience to moral law. And, above all, to see spiritual truths we must have that

spiritual intelligence which we call faith, and which discerns what the mere eye of sense cannot see. As well might we attempt to teach music to one who from birth has been deaf, or painting to one who born blind has no perception of colour, as set spiritual truth before one who has not the gift of spiritual vision. The faculty by which it can be known is not in him. It never enters into his mind at all. It simply lies upon the surface of his ears, and Satan or some bird of the air carries it away as soon as fallen.

The faculty, however, for learning spiritual truth is more than a faculty; resulting from the personal presence within us of the third person of the Blessed Trinity, God the Holy Ghost. The *rationale* of this is thus expounded by St. Paul: "What man knoweth the things of a man save the Spirit of man that is in him; even so, the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." That is to say to know the things of any being, we must have the mind of that being:—to know how angels think and feel, we must have the mind of angels; to know how men think and feel, we must have the mind of men,—and so, likewise, only God knows the things of God, only God's Spirit searches the deep things of God; and, therefore, if we are to know the mysteries of the kingdom, God's Spirit must enter into us, God's spirit must dwell within us, God's Spirit must be a divine light behind our reason, a divine mind within our minds, that so we may be able, men though we are, to reach up to the mind of God.

And to whom is the Spirit given? The Spirit of God is given by Christ to His own people "He shall guide *you*." The Spirit of God is not given to the world, or to those who are in a state of nature. He is Christ's greatest gift to the Church, and to those who are in a state of grace. Not that even the poor idolatrous heathen are absolutely and altogether abandoned by God, so that none of the remoter influences of the Spirit reach them. St. Paul could say to the Athenians that all men are in a certain real sense God's offspring, and could assure them

that God had appointed to all their migrations and changes of time and circumstance, in order that at last they might feel after the truth and find it in Him. Even in the deadest embers of humanity faint sparks of the Divine fire may be detected, sparks which the Divine breath of the Spirit has cherished, and which, in His infinite mercy, He may yet blow up into a flame. But the Spirit of God fills the Church of God, dwelling in the whole body, and making each member of Christ His own temple. It is by virtue of regeneration and admission to the Christian Church and covenant that man acquires the power of knowing the things of God.

There is yet another question. Of what nature is the influence which the Holy Spirit exercises in God's people? He is a guide and strengthener. He leads and He strengthens. He strengthens and enables the will, so that it can do what God commands and receive what God teaches, and then He shows to man the way in which he should go, pointing but not compelling. He empowers the will and directs the will, but He does not force it. The man in whom the Spirit is has all help from above, yet is not driven, but is free. The Holy Spirit is a power, a vast and overwhelming power, like the wind when it blows in strength, like water rolling in its majesty. Yet that power is not so much a driving force as a guiding influence. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.". The Spirit guides, strives, enlightens, cheers, but He does not compel; and thus that men may really receive Divine knowledge and advance in it, something more is needed even than the Spirit of God. What is that something? It is a man's own will, a man's own appetite for spiritual knowledge, a man's own hunger and thirst for righteousness and truth. In order that a man may find the deep things of God he must co-operate with God. Truth will never work its way into his mind unless he wishes to find it, unless he studies it deeply, unless he searches for it. "He will guide *you*." But who are *you*?—Men of Apostolic temper, men who

have sold all to buy the pearl of price, men who can leave all to follow Christ, men who go where truth leads at all costs, men who will give up all prejudices and prepossessions, and even suffer all persecutions, for the love of God and of truth.

And, lastly, the Spirit guides to Christ. "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." The truth which men learn by the Spirit is the truth as it is in the person, the work, and the offices of Christ.

What then have we seen? (1) That Christian truth can be learnt by men only through the presence within them of the Holy Ghost; (2) That the Holy Ghost is given only to those who are believers in Christ and members of the Church of Christ; (3) That the Holy Ghost's work as a teacher depends on the concurrence of the will of those whom He guides and instructs; (4) That the Holy Ghost teaches only Christ and the things of Christ. And what must we certainly infer from this, so far as concerns the unbelieving? That they *cannot* be taught Christian truth. *We* have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God that *we may know* the things which are freely given to *us* of God." . . . "But the natural man *receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness *unto him*, neither *can he know them, because* they are spiritually discerned." The natural man can receive the things of nature, and can learn the truths of natural religion, because he has not lost the faculty by which these things can be known; but as for spiritual things, as for truths properly and essentially Christian, you might as well think to teach by mouth a class of deaf and dumb boys, as set before such an one things which can be discerned by spiritual capacities. To teach therefore Christians and unbelievers together, or in anything like the same methods, is to overlook the primary fact that between a Christian and an unbeliever there is a fundamental difference of nature. An unbeliever is in a state of nature; a Christian is in a state of grace. An unbeliver is a descendant only of the first and fallen Adam; a Christian has

been born again by the water of baptism and the gift of the Spirit, and has a different nature because he is united, in intellect, in body, in spirit, with the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. There is thus a radical difference between the two; and to be unmindful of this difference is to be on the one hand scarcely reverent to the Spirit who inhabits a Christian, and on the other is to mislead the unbeliever by inducing him to look on the science of religion as if it was acquired by mere intellect, and as if he was at liberty to deal with it as with language, or mathematics, or any of the ordinary subjects of school-lore. We have heard of a class of unbelievers engaged in the study of St. Paul's Epistles. Is this a fact? If it be, may we be permitted first to say that such a fact shocks our simplest religious instincts with a sense of utter profanation of truth which it involves, and, next, to ask those who are engaged in leading such studies, whether or not spiritual things are spiritually discerned?' The marvel to us is, that men of the schools of religious thought which are wont to proclaim loudest the need of spiritual vision are the chief practical contradictors of its necessity. Out of the very chairs of Calvin, practice proclaims the doctrine that spiritual things are intellectually discerned.

LETTER III.

How should unbelievers be taught—How did our Lord teach them—The FORM of His teaching—By parables—Nature a fit exponent of Divine truth—Suitable for both believers and unbelievers—Unbelievers addressed in parables—(1) Out of respect to the dignity of truth—(2) Out of tenderness—He stooped to the level of His hearers—He uses the language of nature—He addresses not the understanding but the imagination—He intends to awaken the conscience—Parables the one intelligible form of spiritual truth—(3) That the hardened might be repelled —There was mercy in such repulsion.

HITHERTO we have been engaged in considering our Lord's method as a teacher of disciples, and from that we have negatively inferred in what way we are *not* to teach unbelievers. If disciples were taught only as they were able to bear truth, *a fortiori* unbelievers must not be taught as if men in a state of nature could bear to see truth plainly. If the gift of the Spirit is needed in order that men may have spiritual perception, men who certainly have not the Spirit must *not* be treated as if they could perceive spiritual things.

But then what are we to do with men who are in a non-spiritual state? Are we to keep truth from them altogether? Are we not to teach them true religion at all? or, is there some way by which truth can be brought near to them, with a chance, or even a hope, that they may learn from it? What we cannot do is plain. But what *can* we do? This we have to consider now. Our Lord did not teach unbelievers *as* He taught disciples, but He did teach unbelievers. How then did He teach them? Let us see.

Our Lord taught those who were "without" in parables, and at the same time gave His reason for so teaching. So that

we know that His method of teaching unbelievers was the parabolic, and in the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew, we have His own reason given to His disciples in answer to the pertinent question—"Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?" The method and the reason are set clearly before us and the reason will account for and explain the method which He used.

Before, however, we consider the reason, some general remarks must be made concerning parables in themselves.

Parables, then, are characteristic of our Lord's teaching, as distinguished from all former teachers of men. The parabolic method is essentially the Christian method. Not that no Jew before our Lord ever used a parable, or that even Gentile teachers had never handled them as means of communicating truth; but no one before made so much use of them, or was so at home in them, or handled them with such easy and perfect skill, or showed that there was the most intimate and natural affinity between the things which He taught and this instrument and vehicle of carrying them into the human mind and human heart.

Nor, as must be evident, was this connection between parables and truth as taught by Christ merely accidental; but parables—using the word in its broadest meaning—arise out of Christian truth as its genuine and necessary product. For in parables and parabolic language truth is set before us under comparisons drawn from the facts of nature. And what is the actual connection between truth and these natural facts? It is a connection of the same kind as that between Godhead and Manhood in the Incarnate Son. God manifest in human nature—joined to nature so that nature could manifest Godhead while yet in no way confounded with it—what is this but God and truth revealed through nature? and what else does this involve consequentially, but that nature in all its limits is a fit exponent of divine truth? The expression of truth in parables is the didactic parallel to the manifestation, visibly, audibly, tangibly,

of the Word of life. In fact, the Incarnation Itself is the root-parable, and parable of parables, and He who became Incarnate spoke in parables and parabolic language, not only because He read the soul of nature and saw in earth the counterpart of Heaven, so that the things of earth redeemed by His passion —light, air, water, fire, bread, clothing—are true images of supernatural realities by which the quickened heart can lay hold on the realities themselves, not only for this, but also because having taken nature upon Himself He had made nature His mouthpiece, and had constituted nature at once the fitting and the legitimate interpreter of His mind and will.

Thus, parables, while suited for men in general as speaking the language of nature, are not intended *only* for unbelievers, though having a special office towards them. The parabolic method has an office towards all, believing or unbelieving; to all, in fact, proportionally to their dulness of perception in spiritual things. Parable is the antithesis to plain and open speech. "The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs"—the original word is kindred to parables—"but I shall show you plainly of the Father." To that time men draw nearer and nearer in proportion as they become more god-like, but it never fully comes on this side of eternity. "Now we see through a glass darkly." Not till "then face to face." The Christian, as a Christian, is in a state of grace, moving among things which are supernatural, as a child of God and a subject of the militant kingdom of Heaven, but nature is still on him and around him, and he must look through nature even upon the things of God. Nor is this condition his bondage without being also his exaltation. If nature is his chain it is also the wings on which he mounts upwards, and that which now conditions his vision lifts him ever nearer to that state in which his vision will be plain.

And now we ask with the disciples: "*Why* speakest Thou unto *them* in parables?" Why did our Lord in addressing unbelievers speak to them chiefly in figures and pictures, show-

ing the truth in grouped forms drawn from the actual works and scenes of nature, and not speak to them "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" in plain and open speech?

1. Out of respect to the great dignity of truth. This is very distinctly implied in His solemn adjuration at the end of His first parable, as it is expressly stated elsewhere. "Who hath ears to hear let him hear." As much as to say: "There is truth if you have the will to hear it. There is truth, but not in such a form that you can abuse it. If you care for it, and search, you will find it. If you care not, you will leave it, wrapped in the veil which hides its beauty from impure, profane, and merely prying eyes."

Parables demand attention, and attention involves a certain respect, which at least borders on love, for truth. The sound of truth is in them, deep and multitudinous, like the sound of the sea breaking in many waves which all are one voice together, but it is an articulate sound only to those who fix their attention, keeping their ears erect and open so as distinctly to catch the separate elements which compose the sound. To others it is a noise rather than a sound: they hear something, but they do not hear the very thing which is said. That happens which occurred at the Jewish feast when the voice of God spoke audibly to our Lord, and probably also, to the disciples. The people that stood by thought that it was thunder, others that an angel spoke; and yet that voice came for the sake of those very people. But to those who had ears for heavenly revelations, the voice was perfectly articulate: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." So it is with parables. The truth itself is not put forth bare and naked, but is covered while it is revealed. To the pure it appears in its purity, to the impure it is an impenetrable screen through which their eyes cannot pierce. That which is holy is put before dogs that by its power they may be dogs no longer, but it is not actually given unless they are changed from dogs to rational men. The fair translucent pearls of truth are shown even to swine, but

are not cast into the dirt that the swine may turn again and rend them.

And, indeed, we scarcely need our Lord's teaching to discover that truth is not to be exposed in its nakedness, all pure and fair though it may be, to those corrupt minds which can but see it through their own debasement. Our very instincts tell us that it is not less useless than it it is profane to throw away truth on those who are without the powers which can appreciate its excellence. A teacher of any subject, if he is really one who can be called a teacher, is sensitive to the state of those whom he teaches, and puts out, if we may say so, the feelers of his own mind to touch their thoughts and test their powers of receptivity. And if, on doing this, he finds that they are dull and unreceptive, he instinctively shrinks within himself and checks the outflow of the stream of knowledge which is running from him, giving it forth in measure and limitation, embodying it, too, in forms which his hearers can comprehend; and this, quite as much out of reverence to that which he teaches, as because he has proved the shallowness of the vessel into which he is endeavouring to pour his truth. Let us imagine to ourselves some good musician set to teach music to a class of rude unlettered savages, or to untutored boors. How would this master in the laws of harmony proceed? Would he play to them the music of Beethoven, or Mendelssohn or Bach? Would he speak to them in plain speech of those mysterious laws and principles which lie beneath the noblest forms of melody? No. He would feel rather than remind himself that their perceptions were of the dullest order. He would sound the several notes of the scale so as sharply to mark their differences. He would draw broad lines upon a black board to show the simpler differences of sound. He would use their eyes to reach their ears, and he would speak to their ears in sounds suited to their present dulness. And he would do this, not only because this was all that they could yet learn, but because he *could not* make his art cheap, or waste the higher forms of

sound on minds which could not estimate their glory and sweetness. He would shrink from disclosing high music to their ruder sense, as from a kind of sacrilege.

2. Next, our Lord spoke in parables out of tenderness and condescension. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance." This cannot *only* mean, though it does mean, as we shall see afterwards, that parables were used to shut truth out from view, because if our Lord had desired *only* to hide truth He would not have taught the unbelieving at all. It also means that He stooped to the level of His hearers in order to bring truth near them. "*Why* speakest thou to them in parables?" That is the question. "Because they are different from you:" that is the answer. "If I speak to them at all, I must speak thus, and I do speak thus rather than not speak at all. I give them truth in this form because they cannot receive more. If they could receive more, I would give more, but this they ought to be able to receive." The knowledge of the divine mysteries in plainness is a special gift bestowed on those who are within the kingdom, and move among its secrets, which to them are things seen. Others being in a state of nature cannot know what is required by grace, but they *can* know those natural forms which may figuratively express the things of grace, and thus through nature reach the supernatural.

For those, then, who are in a state of nature, our Lord in tenderness speaks in the language of nature, the only tongue which they can understand. Heavenly things are plainly described only in heavenly language, and this being beyond earthly and carnal-minded hearers, He could not speak plainly to them. But heavenly things can wear an earthly form, and He would show them in that earthly form, as the only form which carnal men could see. If they could not rise to His level, if they could not go up like Moses to be amid the clouds upon

the mountain top with God, He himself would come down to the plains and valleys, and speak with Nature's children there. And of what will He speak to them? Of sowers going out to sow seed, of trees growing great from very small beginnings, of traders selling and buying, of nets catching fish, of pearls bought at great cost and sacrifice, of marriage festivals, of sheep lost and found, of money, of sons who break loose from the wise control of fathers and return again to that control, of petitioners who are importunate, of rich fools who eat and drink and are merry, of men who make wise or foolish use of money committed to their trust, of young women who go to buy oil when it is too late; of all the common things of daily life.

These things in themselves are perfectly intelligible, and that even to the young, the rude, and the illiterate, because they address themselves to that which is the simplest and most universal and yet at the same time the highest of man's natural endowments—not to the understanding but to the *imagination*—going home at once to the feelings, going straight like an arrow to the heart. They are, in fact, picture-stories—or rather picture-incidents, for they are rather facts than tales,—and the pictures are so vivid and the facts are so interesting that at once they should arrest even a careless listener. If a man has any ears at all he must hear them. Not, of course, that every man *has* ears. Many have not. The defect, however, is not in the parable but in the listener. The parable has such a clear note of truth that even deaf men can hear it, if they wish to overcome their deafness. Will alone is wanting to make the sound audible. Because parables are like the pillar of cloud when it stood in the night between the Egyptians and the children of Israel. In itself it was one and the same pillar of light, but to them it had opposite properties. It was a cloud and darkness to those, but it gave light by night to these. To the enemies of God they are darkness, but to God's children they are light.

For there is that about the parables which makes a listener feel at once that there is more in them than meets the ear, a subdued yet clear undertone of mystery which seems to wake *conscience* out of its sleep, a purpose seen through the transparent surface, like the thread which runs through a necklace of pearls, holding all together, giving to all a practical purpose and aim. Outwardly, they are poetic, picturesque, imaginative; inwardly, they are intellectual, dogmatic, true. Drunk in like milk, by children and persons of a simple and docile temper,—while rejected as wanting in strength by men of coldly-proud disposition, whose vision, such as it is, comes from the understanding rather than the heart,—they change within, when pondered and digested, into bone and sinew; they build up a Christian child into solid and manly strength.

Thus, parables, as being truth clothed in the form of nature, have a special mission towards those who are in a condition of nature. To all, even to the spiritual, they are a help in proportion to weakness, but to the natural man they are the one intelligible form of spiritual truth. The natural man cannot see truth at all except in forms of nature. But nature is the work of God, and there is no essential contrariety between truth and nature. Truth therefore may be clothed in forms of nature, and in those forms may insinuate itself deep into the heart, and lay hold upon the vitals of human character, fascinating first by its beauty, and then renewing and reviving within by its hidden strength. And our Lord spoke in parables that, if possible, He might catch the unbelieving, winning them as children are won, by the feelings and the imagination, and reaching the understanding by that door which is open in every genuine human heart.

3. There was a further, and as may seem at first a contrary, reason, but which is really not inharmonious with the last. Our Lord spoke in parables that He might *repel* the unbelieving; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. For "whosoever hath not, from him shall be

taken away even that he hath." To the obstinate and hardened parables are intentionally screens. The pillar of cloud is purposely darkness to the Egyptians.

No truth is more certain than that good will on the part of the learner is necessary if truth is to be personally received. The teacher may lead him to the river of life, but there the teacher's office ceases; the disciple must himself kneel down and drink. It is morally impossible that a man can become good, or even learn truth unless he wills it and thirsts for it. And there is a parallel and not less certain truth, that sooner or later God rejects those Pharaohs who obstinately refuse His gifts. Indeed our will, is, if not our capacity for goodness, the measure of such capacity; and to him in whom a good will is found, God's gifts are granted in ever multiplying ratio, while from him who has it not, the very will is taken; the very possibility of renewal is judicially withdrawn by God.

Well! parables, as means of teaching, exactly correspond with these truths. Parables speak chiefly to the *will*, in the language of the feelings; approaching the will through the open door of imagination. Parables, therefore, demand attention, as we have shown before. Parables disclose themselves to those who search for their meaning. Plain as they are, their meaning is not on the surface, but is the thread which runs through and inside the clear translucent pearls, and to see that thread and trace it through its windings must be the work of the will. If there is no will, the mind seeing sees not, and hearing does not understand.

And our Lord, in the case of the hardened and impenitent, intended that the truth should be hidden. His teaching, in its form and method meant: "If you desire truth there it is, needing but a key to open it, and that key I will give you, if you really wish to know what is inside. But if your heart is so dull that truth has no charm for your affections; the casket is locked and I take the key from you." And so it has

always been. "The Lord," said Isaiah of old, "hath poured on you the spirit of deep sleep and hath closed your eyes." Hence the sternness of that aspect of our Lord, which we must call His prevailing aspect towards the Jews, a sadly-loving sternness, as of one who longed to do them good but turned from them in the chillness of disappointed affection. Once, "He looked round about on them in anger, being grieved for the hardness of their heart." At another time, when asked for a sign, "He sighed deeply in His Spirit and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign?" and so with such a deep-drawn sigh and with such looks of anger and sorrow He put His parables before them, knowing that the vast majority would spurn them as worthless, and therefore using them as bandages to case their eyes, already blind, in a seven-fold covering of deeper blindness.

Meeting them on the ground of nature He failed to pierce the shell by which their eyes were covered, and therefore He took from them even the light of nature. "If the light which is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." And such has been the darkness of the Jews through eighteen centuries of reprobation, a darkness so solid and palpable that we can almost handle it and weigh it. Israel has become Egypt, and the pillar of cloud still thickens the darkness of a continued night. Nor, indeed, ought we to forget that blindness to parable belongs even to believers, in proportion as their imagination is unrefined and unspiritualized. It was not to opponents but to disciples that our Lord, when He had spoken of "leaven" said, "Have ye your heart yet hardened? . . . . how is it that ye do not understand?"

But now let us ask, was there not mercy even in the repulsion? We believe that there was. "For judgment I am come into the world that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." Connect this with what St. Paul says: "Have they stumbled that they should fall. God forbid." There was an end beyond their fall. "Through their

fall salvation is come to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy." They fell that the Gentiles might stand, and the standing of the Gentiles will lead in time to the recovery and restoration of the Jews. Their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, and "blindness in part is happened to the Gentiles until the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, and so all Israel shall be saved." We do not enter into all the questions thus suggested, but we seem to see mercy and ultimate recovery even in reprobation. Since nothing less would make them see, they should be punished with a blindness so evident to themselves, as it has long been to others, that at last they should become conscious of it, and go with consciences, touched and roused at last, to the Light of the world and ask Him to restore their vision. Thus out of the depths of blindness should come sight, and out of the extreme of chastisement, salvation.

Thus parables may do a work parallel to that of the old law —which, by the way, was a teacher by means of figures and images, and come as near the parabolic method as was possible before the Incarnation. The Law was designed to produce in men a consciousness of sin through observation of their own inability to do what it figuratively showed them to be right.

> "And therefore was Law given them, to evince
> Their natural pravity, by stirring up
> Sin against Law to fight."

Viewed thus there is mercy in the removal from the obstinate of that light which nature gives, because in some cases the very intensity of their need may make them conscious of their poverty. If, in pride of thought, men are saying that they have need of nothing, and know not that they are miserable, poor, blind, and naked, what else can mercy do but make them feel that even children and fools can see where they are blind? When our Lord entered Jerusalem the children welcomed Him with praise, while the Pharisees, looking on their praise as blasphemy, asked Him to rebuke their pious zeal. But what

was our Lord's answer? "If these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." The children were only seeing what the stones saw, and singing what the stones would sing if man was dumb. It was among His last appeals to the obdurate Jews, and of all it was the strongest. Will you be blinder and harder than the stones? And of this kind is the appeal which Christ in mercy makes to the hardest who hear His parables. For in them nature itself becomes a prophet. The rocks, the rivers, the trees, the fields, the flowers, the beasts, the winds, the sky, all become vocal, and, uttering the truths of that Gospel which Christ preached, speak to every unbelieving soul, and say: harden not your heart against the truth of God, for we ourselves proclaim it with consentient voice to every child of man who lives beneath the light of heaven. Such is the piercing cry of universal nature, and he who, soon or late, heeds it not, has no heart to feel and no ears to hear.

LETTER IV.

Miracles were acted parables—They showed to sense the blessings Christ came to bestow—He was the ideal man—His whole life was parabolic teaching—He only partially showed His secrets to His followers—He led them through nature to God—The SUBSTANCE of His teaching—His name, "the Son of Man," a claim to the Messiahship—It implied, but veiled, the fact that He was also "the Son of God"—Their supreme teacher—The light of the world—This was the "Gospel of the Kingdom"—The nature of His kingdom was explained in parables—Visible and outward, but also in human hearts—His main object to rouse the conscience—He claimed the heart—The claim was enforced by His own love—"He gave himself for us"—He thus set up His throne in human hearts—Both the METHOD and SUBSTANCE of His teaching illustrated in the cases of the woman of Samaria and the blind man.

OUR Lord, as we have seen, spoke to those who were without in parables. But the principle which underlaid His parables and parabolic language appeared also in His miracles, which were not mere wonderful works, but an important means of teaching those to whom, and before whose eyes, they were done. His miracles were not only signs of the Divine power, which was lodged within Him, and of the Divine mercy and benevolence which guided Him in the exercise of His Divine power; they were instructions by which he showed at once His ability and willingness to benefit the souls of men. When about to cure the sick of the palsy He prefaced His action by saying: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Before anointing the eyes of the man who was born blind He made the solemn declaration: "As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world." After feeding the multitude in the desert He taught that He was

"the bread of life," and that His Body and Blood were the sustenance of man's spiritual vitality. He brought fish to the nets of His Apostles to show them that by His aid they would catch men. He raised Lazarus from the dead to prove that He was Himself the resurrection. And so in other cases. Thus our Lord's miracles were really *acted* parables; differing in this way from His parables, that whereas His parables showed in *figure* to *imagination* the *truth* which He was and came into the world to teach, His miracles represented in *fact* to *sense* the *good* which He had within Himself and came to do to man. He went about doing good marvellously. As men watched His career they saw an Almighty benevolence issuing from His person, so that by His word, His touch, His saliva, even His garments, He ruled in every sphere of nature; and as they beheld disease, spirits of evil, wind and sea, submissive to Him, the only legitimate conclusion was that God was in human nature, and that man could now again, by means of Him, be master of himself, and, therefore, of all besides.

Indeed, as He was Himself the great parable, God manifest in flesh, so His whole life was His parabolic teaching; and the form in which he placed truth before the world was Himself, such as He was, such as He acted, spoke, lived, died. It is thus that we must regard His life as a whole. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The sight of Him was the great lesson, addressed at once to sense and imagination, of those in whose villages and streets He revealed God. The report of Him which has since gone out into the world, by the written testimony of the Gospels, and the living witness of the Apostles and those whom they have sent, is the great lesson of humanity. As He lived day by day and came in contact with men of all sorts, and with every kind of human circumstance in the complex relations of public and private life, He acted as the ideal man, doing what God, if man, must do; He spoke words of perfect

wisdom which each case and circumstance demanded ; He showed to men as in a glass, all that was within their secret hearts ; He gave out the thoughts of God, and yet of a man, on all emerging topics, religious, social, moral, even political. He let fall, so to speak, on all with whom He came in contact through a human intelligence the mind which is in God. He manifested Himself to the world in so far as the world could apprehend Him, and He revealed to the world his mind in so far as the world could draw it out, and give Him opportunity to show it chiefly by the contact of opposition. But He did not show His secrets except to His own followers, and to them only in so far as they were able to appreciate them ; for mysteries need a key to open them, and He was Himself the key of David, which turned only in the hands of those in whom faith in Himself was a confirmed habit, growing perfect through the increasing presence of the spirit of love. His whole life was thus His doctrine, and His parables and miracles were, if we may so call them, the lectures on the catechism of a teacher, who, Himself identified with visible nature, led men up through nature to God who is a Spirit, and, when He had done this, giving them the Spirit, showed them the mysteries of the kingdom, because they could then bear to know God.

Such in the main, was the form in which our Lord taught the world.

And now we pass from the form to the *substance ;* observing, as we do so, that, while the form is distinguishable from the substance, the substance is so far conditioned by the form that only such substance can be taught under any form as is capable of taking on itself that form. If our Lord's life was His parable addressed to the unbelieving world, the truth contained in that parable must have been in the main such as could show itself in a human life. Thus the truth which our Lord taught to those who were incapable of seeing it in its unveiled essence must have been truth as it is in Christ, presented chiefly as a thing of doing and practice, of life in Him working life in

them; may we not say, for we speak with caution on a matter at once of difficulty and of grave importance, not so much truth in notion as truth in fact, and may we not represent our Lord's bearing and demeanour to those outside His kingdom as if He had thus spoken to them: 'Behold in Me the life of God, and come to Me that you too may live.'

His favourite name for Himself when speaking to the Jews was "Son of Man." That name, borrowed from the book of Daniel, was a distinct claim to the Messiahship, and indicated that He was the second Adam, the flower and head of human nature, who would come at the end as Judge to claim His Eternal Kingdom, and distinctly implied, while it veiled the fact, that He was also the Son of God. He put Himself forward as the founder of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, and that in such a way, that He was not only the law of men who were His subjects, but their supreme teacher, and their mediatorial way to God. He spoke of Himself in a style of majestic egotism, which only His perfect oneness with God would justify, and with a tone of authority, astonishing to all who heard Him, which would have been at once ridiculous and blasphemous if He had not had a right to make Himself the Son of God. Himself, the light from which all truth issued, the perfection from which all goodness emanated, the will one with the Father's from which all justice proceeded, the power on earth by which sin could be forgiven and all things could be done —this was "the Gospel of the Kingdom" which He preached, this the message of joy which He made known to man.

And while He preached the actual arrival upon earth of this kingdom of grace, life, and truth, and while He invited every eye to see in Him its king, He explained its nature—chiefly in His parables, because He could not speak openly of the universal Church to the carnalized Jews, or even to His own disciples not yet endowed fully with the Spirit—showing it to be a vast society, having good hearts as its seat, evil men mingled with good as its trial, the nations of the whole earth

as its subjects, a life growing outwards from an inward ferment as its mode of manifestation, sacrifice without limit as the cost at which it would be won, the end of the world as its time of final glory and realized perfection. Visible and outward as much as any of the four great empires which preceded it, and whose place it took, and excelling all these both in extent and glory, it would be essentially a kingdom of hearts. The Baptist described the King as holding in His hand a fan with which He winnowed those who came to Him, severing the wheat from the chaff upon His threshing floor. That fan was the inward conformity with the Divine mind which He demanded, the heart turning to God in genuine *repentance*, the heart seeing the invisible and cleaving to it through laying hold on His manhood in *faith*, the heart living on Him in whom it believed by *loving obedience*. Before a man could see the kingdom he must be regenerated by seminal renewal of his whole nature. That a man might live in it and keep its laws, his life must be constantly renewed by spiritually feeding on the Body and Blood of his King. He dealt with men's hearts first and chiefly, rather than with their intellects. His main object as an educator was to rouse while He subdued the conscience, and thus, having made for Himself a throne within a human being, to reign from that throne over every department of his nature, and bring every thought into a captivity which made a human soul entirely free. Christ "asks"—said Napoleon in a conversation which confessed that our Lord was more than man—"asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally, and forthwith His command is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ." Give Me thy heart. That was the unconditional demand of Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth,

and the life." You must come to God, who is your Father, and come through Me. This was the substance of all that our Lord taught as an educator of unbelievers, whom He would fain draw from sin to God.

Mingled too with this demand, so as to form part of the appeal, and to commend it by the strongest of arguments was the evidence, not so much spoken as practically given, that He gave His own heart to those from whom He asked theirs. If He said to one,—"Sell that that thou hast . . . . and come and follow Me;" to another,—"Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God;" to a third,—that if he would come after Him, he must hate father and mother and even his own life; did not all who heard Him know that though the foxes had holes and the birds of the air nests the Son of Man was houseless and homeless? Men saw One who could absolutely control the world of nature, One to whom acts of divine power were as much the ordinary facts of His life as the work of their daily calling to other men, and yet this Man did nothing for His own benefit, possessed all things yet abnegated all, at last give Himself to those who were bent on killing Him though Lord of life. This after all was His greatest doctrine, filling the mind of such men as St. Paul with overwhelming emotions of gratitude. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The self-emptying, the self-abnegation of Godhead, out of devotion to man, taught by our Lord distinctly to Nicodemus, the King of Heaven reigning from a cross in this desert world, and lifted up in self-chosen sacrifice; this was the crown at once of His royalty and of His doctrine; by this above all He won His way to human affections, and set up His absolute sway within the consciences of men.

But both the method and the substance of what our Lord taught will be best seen by examples, and, as space forbids more, we shall select one in particular, as a typical instance, that of the woman of Samaria. To our mind it is the most

perfect example of our Lord's conduct as an educator of unbelieving souls. Our Lord is alone, weary and thirsty, at the side of Jacob's well. A woman from the city of Sychar comes to draw water. Our Lord says to her: "Give me to drink." The woman, looking on Him as an ordinary Jew, expresses not unnatural surprise that He should ask a favour of a Samaritan, and at once our Lord takes the occasion to speak to her heart and soul, at the same time drawing her attention to *Himself*. Was she surprised at this? He had asked of her *a* gift of water, God's commonest gift to all, but if she knew to *whom* she was speaking, and that He had the gift of God, the case would have been reversed; she would have been the asker, and He would have been the giver, and His gift would have been *living* water. "The gift of God," was not perhaps Himself, though God "gave His only begotten Son," but His Spirit, afterwards called living water. He indeed, though a Jew, had stooped to ask of her, but it really was a condescension, for He could give what was like, but much better. Our Lord spoke in a parable, and the woman's ears were dull. Water! living water! What could He mean? Where was any better water than this which Jacob himself had drunk? and he had nothing to draw with, though the well was deep. She was lost. Yet His words had made her *think*, and she was serious. Our Lord proceeded, and tried to call her thoughts from *this* water to *that* of which He had spoken, still speaking in parable, but unfolding the parable, by saying that His water possessed immortal properties, and could give, not mere temporary refreshment but endless life, welling up as from an overflowing fountain. He spoke to her imagination, to her feelings, to her inner self, trying to draw her through the visible to the invisible, through the material to the spiritual. But without effect; for though the woman had grown serious for a time, she returned to that somewhat vulgar temper of mind which first showed itself in her expressions of surprise:—"Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." 'It would

certainly be a great thing to find water which had such properties as would keep me from future thirst, and save me from the labour of my daily journeys to this well.'

Our Lord then had set *Himself* before her, and had taught her by a parabolic form of speech. And though He had not succeeded in reaching her heart, He had not altogether failed; for He had stirred her thoughtfulness a little, and His parabolic words, like nails, had fastened themselves, and taken some hold of her imagination, and she was in a state of mind out of which more might come. But there was something in the way. Imagination was asleep, and why? because conscience was dead, and, therefore, He must bring conscience back into life by showing the woman to herself, and by showing also that He knew all that was in her, in fact by lending her His eyes to see her own heart. He had been speaking to her of life, and she did not know what He was speaking of, for she had death in her but not life, and He would make life intelligible by making her conscious of death. Straight then to the very core of her nature He shot His arrow, which settled among the roots and springs of her life. "Go call thy husband and come hither." She had one whom she and others called her husband, but she was talking to a man with whom she could not trifle; He was evidently one with whom she must be honest, and she was to bring the so-called husband, and stand with him face to face before this somewhat mysterious man, who talked about living water. Well, disguises and excuses were useless: "I have no husband." Our Lord at once showed that, not by earthly knowledge, but by intuition and omniscience, He knew all that was in her, her whole history, outer and inner. She had spoken quite truly; she had had five husbands, and this man whom she now had was not her husband. Here, then, matters were becoming serious. When He spoke to her of water she could run off to Jacob and other matters, which kept reflection at arm's length. But now it was evident that she had met with one who read her secret soul. "Sir, I perceive that

Thou art a prophet." But if He was a prophet, and if her life was wrong, could He help her to get right? and yet, as in the case of all in whom conscience is only beginning to stir and not thoroughly alive, fear of truth was mingled with a wish to get nearer to it. She speaks therefore as to a prophet, but she does not ask, What must I do to get rid of this inward death? Desire and fear, light and darkness, make at first a compromise, and she asks about the questions in dispute as to the place of worship between Jews and Samaritans. But now our Lord, tightening the cords of His enchaining love which He was winding round her, drew her from thoughts about place to thoughts about the being, the personality, the love of God, Whom she had ignorantly worshipped. Ask not *where*, but *who*. The hour is at hand when God will be clearly made known to all in every nation and in every place, as the Father of His Son who loves all who are in His Son, and for His Son's sake. "Salvation is of the Jews," for from Sion will go forth redemption, but God is the God of all, Jews and Gentiles. God is a Spirit and therefore tied to no particular locality. All that He requires is to be treated as a Spirit and worshipped as a Spirit by men who worship spiritually and truly. The Spirit of truth must enter into her, must rule her, must change her life.

Our Lord began with "living water," but could not fully reach her heart thus. He then probed her conscience to its bottom, and having done this led her by this new road to the point from which He started. He began with the Spirit as water; He ends with the Spirit of truth. And what is the conclusion of all? "I know that when Messias cometh, He shall tell us all things." He evoked as the result of all a desire for the expected Messiah as the teacher of the world. 'You tell me this, and what you say may be true, but we need one whom we can rely on as speaking with authority from heaven. That one is coming, and no doubt will soon come. When He does come, we shall certainly know all.' See how with marvellous

skill He leads her up to the very edge of faith in the Messiah. And then comes what must have seemed to her the blessed yet astounding announcement,—"I that speak unto thee am He." And now the woman was in faith and conviction a Christian. She had found Him of whom Moses and the prophets had written, and He was Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. And what was her own account of her conversion? "Come, see *a man which told me all things that ever I did:* is not *this* the Christ?" She had found one who proved His Messiahship by showing her to herself as she really was. And the same was afterwards the record of her countrymen: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

And we might examine other cases of conversion with similar characteristics; that of the blind man, as an instance of one brought by personal affliction and persecution to faith in the "Son of God;" of Nicodemus, as a Jew not far from the Kingdom of God, who was brought to a conviction, afterwards avowed, that He, the "Son of Man," was "the only begotten Son of God;" of Nathaniel, as one of those who waited for redemption in Israel, who was taught to believe in an open heaven, and of intercourse between earth and heaven, carried on through Him who is the Son of Man. In all cases the heart and the conscience are appealed to, and the object was the creation of a living faith in the Son of Man as God. To the blind man the question was put plainly, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" The answer was, "Who is He, that I might believe on Him?" "I would believe in Him if I knew where to find Him, and who He is." Then came the revelation, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." This was but an echo of the announcement to the woman of Samaria: "I that speak unto thee am He." A God brought near to us, and speaking at once to our ears and our consciences, is the God who can convert an unbelieving heart.

LETTER V.

St. Peter and St. Paul taught as their hearers were able to bear truth—Addressing unbelievers, they dwelt primarily upon His being "the Son of Man"—Canon Liddon's Bampton Lectures—Mr. Maurice's Religions of the World—The five principles involved in the argument are in accordance with the system of the early Church—Esoteric and Exoteric teaching, or the Disciplina Arcani, is not advocated with respect to believers—That system described by Bishop Kaye—Clement of Alexandria's Hortatory Addresses would be useful to Missionaries—The system of the early Church derived from that of our Lord and His Apostles—Even Catechumens were taught only elementary truths—Certain principles acted on—The privileges of the baptized and the Catechumens contrasted—The mysteries of the kingdom were carefully concealed from Catechumens and strangers—Catechumens divided into four classes, and the teaching graduated—Bishop Kaye on Tertullian—There was no reserve after baptism—St. Cyril's catechetical lectures—St. Augustine's treatise—Three reasons for this system—The method employed by Alcuin.

In considering the substance of our Lord's teaching, we were compelled by want of space to pass by that reference to the Jewish Scriptures which was so important an element in it. He put Himself forward as the one great subject of prophecy, as the person of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. More than this we shall not now say, and we refer to it not so much for its own sake and on account of its connection with God's earlier revelations and teachings of the Jews and of mankind, as for its witness to the principle that unbelievers must be met on grounds common to them and the believer, of which the preaching of the Apostles as Missionaries give some fine illustrations. Thus we pass from the example of our Lord to

that of His Apostles and of that earlier Church on which their mantle fell.

Among the Apostles our chief examples are those who were respectively sent to the circumcision and the uncircumcision, and as we find in the Bampton Lectures of Canon Liddon some very pertinent remarks upon the very question which is before us, we shall do better to use his language than to attempt to express the same substance in inferior words of our own. It must be borne in mind, however, that Canon Liddon is treating a different subject. He is showing that St. Peter and St. Paul were never inconsistent in their teaching, but always taught substantially that our Lord was God. They did not always put this truth in the fore-front of the battle, because they taught men as they could bear truth, and approached men whom they addressed as unbelievers rather on the side of our Lord's manhood than His Godhead, presenting Him to their faith primarily as "the Son of Man." Canon Liddon is arguing with sceptical Christians; but an intelligent reader will easily transfer his teaching to the case of those who are professedly beyond the bounds of Christianity.

"Although Jesus Christ is always the central subject in the sermons of St. Peter, yet the distinctness with which he exhibits our Lord in the glory of His Divine Nature seems *to vary with the varying capacity for receiving truth on the part of his audience. Like Jesus Christ Himself, St. Peter teaches as men are able to bear his doctrine; he does not cast pearls before swine.* In his missionary sermons he is addressing persons who were believers in the Jewish dispensation, and were also our Lord's contemporaries. Accordingly, his sermons contain a double appeal, first, to the known facts of our Lord's life and death, and above all, of His Resurrection from the dead; and secondly, to the correspondence of those facts with the predictions of the Hebrew Scriptures. Like St. James, St. Peter lays especial stress on the continuity subsisting between Judaism and the Gospel, but while St. James insists upon the moral element of that connection, St. Peter addresses himself rather to the pro-

phetical. . . . It is not too much to say that in the teaching of the earliest Church, as represented by the missionary discourses of St. Peter and the deacons, Jesus Christ is the very soul and end of Jewish prophecy. This of itself suggests an idea of His person which rises high above any merely humanitarian standard. St. Peter indeed places himself habitually at the point of view which would enable him to appeal to the actual experience of the generation he was addressing. He begins with our Lord's Humiliation, which men had witnessed, and then he proceeds to describe His Exaltation as the honour shed by God upon His human nature. He speaks of our Lord's humanity with fearless plainness (Acts ii. v. 22). As Man, Christ is exhibited to the world as a miracle-worker; as Man, He is anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, &c., &c. . . . . Is it conceivable that He who is Himself the sum and substance of His religion . . . . is notwithstanding in the thought of His Apostles only a glorified man? . . . . Do we not interpret these early discourses most naturally when we bear in mind the measure of reticence *which active missionary work always renders necessary if truth is to win its way amidst prejudice and opposition?* And will not this consideration alone enable us to do justice to those vivid glimpses of Christ's Higher Nature, the fuller exhibition of which is before us in the Apostle's general Epistles?

"In St. Peter's general Epistles it is easy to trace the same mind as that which speaks to us in the earliest missionary sermons of the Acts. *As addressed to Christian believers, these Epistles exhibit Christian doctrine in its fulness, but incidentally to spiritual objects.* . . . St. Peter lays especial stress both on the moral significance and on the atoning power of the Death of Jesus Christ . . . . St. Peter's second Epistle, like the first, begins and ends with Jesus. Its main positive theme is the *higher practical knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"In this *higher knowledge* of Jesus all excellencies find their end and their completion . . . . For this *higher practical knowledge* of Jesus Christ is the means whereby Christians escape from the polluting impurities of the life of the heathen world," &c. (pp. 435-449).

From St. Peter let us pass to St. Paul.

"You cannot make St. Paul a preacher of Humanitarianism without warping, mutilating, degrading his whole recorded mind. . . . . In St. Paul's earliest sermons we do not find the moral precepts of Jesus a more prominent element than the glories of His person and His redemptive work. That the reverse is the case is at once apparent from a study of the great discourse which was pronounced in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch.

"The past history of Israel is first summarized from a point of view which regards it as purely preparatory to the manifestation of the Saviour: and then the true Messiahship of Jesus is enforced by an appeal to the testimony of John the Baptist, to the correspondence of the circumstances of Christ's Death with the prophetic announcements, and to the historical fact of His Resurrection from the grave, which had been witnessed by the Apostles as distinctly as it had been foretold by the prophets. Thus the Apostle reaches his practical conclusion. To believe in Jesus Christ is the one condition of receiving remission of sins.

"At first sight, St. Paul's sermon from the steps of the Areopagus might seem to be rather Theistic than Christian. St. Paul had to gain the ear of a philosophical audience which imagined that 'Jesus and the Resurrection' were 'two strange demons' who might presently be added to the stock of deities already venerated by the Athenian populace. St. Paul is therefore eager to set forth the lofty spirituality of the God of Christendom, but although he insists chiefly on those Divine attributes which are observable in nature and Providence, his sermon ends with Jesus. After showing what God is in Himself, and what are the natural relations which subsist between humanity and God, St. Paul touches the conscience of his Athenian audience by a sharp denunciation of the vulgar idolatry which it despised, and calls men to repent by a reference to the coming judgment, which conscience itself foreshadowed. But the certainty of that judgment has been attested by the historical fact of the Resurrection of Jesus; the risen Jesus is the future judge.

"In the two apologetic discourses delivered, the one from the stairs of the tower of Antonia before the angry multitude, and the other in the Council Chamber at Cæsarea before King

Agrippa II. of Chalcis, St. Paul justifies his missionary activity by dwelling upon the circumstances which accompanied and immediately followed his conversion. Everything had turned upon a *fact* which the Apostle abundantly insists upon—he had received a revelation of Jesus Christ in His heavenly glory. It was Jesus who had spoken to St. Paul from heaven; it was Jesus who had revealed Himself as persecuted in His suffering Church; it was to Jesus that St. Paul had surrendered his moral liberty; it was from Jesus that he had received specific orders to go in to Damascus; Jesus had commissioned him to be a minister and a witness both of what he had *seen*, and of the truths which were yet to be disclosed to him . . . . Who can fail to see that the Lord who in His glorified *Manhood* thus speaks to His servant from the skies, and who is withal revealed in the very centre of his soul, is no created being, is neither saint nor seraph, but rather is the Master of consciences, the Monarch who penetrates, inhabits, and rules the secret life of spirits, the King Who claims the fealty and Who orders the ways of men.

"St. Paul's popular teaching then is emphatically a 'preaching of Jesus Christ.' Our Lord is always the Apostle's theme; but the degree in which His Divine glory is unveiled *varies with the capacity of the Jewish or heathen listeners for bearing the great discovery.* The doctrine is distributed, if we may so say, *in like manner* over the whole text of St. Paul's Epistles" (pp. 484, 489).

To these comments of Canon Liddon we append an extract from Mr. Maurice's Religions of the World, which throws some further and not incongruous light on St. Paul's great discourse at Athens (pp. 225, 229).

"I am forced to use the word *Christianity;* for many purposes it is a convenient one. But I must remind you that it was not a word which was familiar to the Apostles, or to those who succeeded them in the first ages. We are not told that they went forth preaching Christianity. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles says that they preached the 'Kingdom of God' or 'the Gospel of God, or Christ,' or 'the Gospel of Christ.' To expound these words fully, would be to expound the New Testament. But this meaning lies upon

the surface of them: the Apostles came witnessing of a Lord and King—the King and Lord of men. The proclamation of the crucified Man as the Son of God was their Gospel, or good tidings. In that character men were invited to receive Him. . . . . St. Paul at Athens encountered Epicureans and Stoics; he disputed with them in the market-place: when we are made acquainted with his words, we find they were of this kind—'Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.' 'Your poets have said, that we are the offspring of God: it is true; therefore do not make Him after the likeness of things you see and hear. He is not far from any of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.' This language, you see, assumed that the Athenians were in search of God; that they were ignorantly worshipping Him; that they had a sense of His being a Father; that they wanted some one living, human image of Him, to supplant those images of Him which they had made for themselves. In Athens itself the words were little heeded; men there were busy seeking for some new thing to talk of; they were occupied with schemes of the universe: of realities they had lost the perception. But the teaching was adapted to all that was sound and true in the Greek mind; it met whatever actual wants were awake in that mind. The Greek asked for one who should exhibit humanity in his glory; he was told of a Son of Man. He felt that whoever did so exhibit it must be divine. The Son of Man was declared to be the Son of God. He had dreamed of one from whom the most perfect glory man could conceive must have proceeded. He was told of a Father. He had thought of a divine Presence in every tree and flower. He heard of a Presence nearer still to himself. . . . . The Greek mythology was met at all points by this Gospel. What was actually or possibly good in it, the Revelation of Christ comprehended; what was evil and degraded it wrestled with, by proclaiming the good which it had counterfeited. But this was its charm. The Greek had a world without a centre: the preachers of the Gospel made the centre known to him. What could revolve about it, fell into its

proper orbit; what determined to move independently of the centre was seen to be unnatural and distracted."

The italics in these extracts from the Bampton Lectures are our own, and point out some of the features in the Apostolic teaching which we most desire to notice. The view given, as a whole, combines these following principles :—

(*a*) That the Apostles taught as the people could bear their teaching.

(*b*) That they made a broad distinction in their mode of presenting truth, as well as in the substance of what they taught, between believers and unbelievers.

(*c*) That their missionary sermons are the types of their teaching of those without, and that their Epistles, varying in their tone and substance according to the condition of the converts to whom they wrote, are yet as a whole addressed to men who had the Spirit of God, and through faith in Christ possessed spiritual gifts and capacities.

(*d*) That our Lord in His Manhood was the great subject of their missionary teaching, though, like St. Peter in his confession at Cæsarea Philippi, they ever said, more or less distinctly, that He who was the Son of Man was indeed the Son of the living God.

(*e*) That the Epistles, drawn out by the circumstances of Christian Churches, are as a whole an exposition by those who were specially inspired by the Spirit, of "the mysteries of the kingdom" and "the deep things of God."

The whole system of the early Church was in accordance with these principles, as we shall now proceed to show. But before doing so we may guard ourselves against the supposition that we are advocating what is known as the *disciplina arcani*, or an esoteric as distinguished from an exoteric teaching of *believers*. That system, originating with Clement of Alexandria, is fully described in Bishop Kaye's Lectures upon that writer, who flourished between A.D. 192 and 217, and

we subjoin a brief account from the same Bishop's Lectures on Tertullian, which explains what that esoteric teaching was said to be.

But before doing so we may take the occasion to remark that in Clement's writings, especially his "Hortatory Addresses," as given in substance by the Bishop, there is much which would be instructive to missionaries who desire to cope with the Hindu philosophies. They will see there in what way a philosophic author of the second and third centuries dealt with the customs and the philosophic opinions which then resisted Christianity, and, if we mistake not, they might advantageously transfer some of his arguments, as well as his general method, to Eastern lands. This, however, is Bishop Kaye's account of the *disciplina arcani.* (Lectures on the Writings of Tertullian, p. 30-3.)

"The notion that the doctrine of the Gospel was not publicly delivered by the Apostles in its full perfection, but that certain important truths were reserved which the minds of men were not yet able to bear, does not appear to have been peculiar to the school of Montanus. The Valentinians held a similar language, and supposed these mysterious truths to relate to their extravagant and unintelligible fancies respecting the Pleroma and the successive generations of Æons. Even among the orthodox, a notion not altogether dissimilar very generally prevailed. The principal object of the Stromata of Clemens Alexandrinus is to point out the distinction between the Christian who is perfected in knowledge (γνωστικός) and the great mass of believers; and to lay down rules for the formation of this perfect character. He does not, indeed, like Montanus, profess to communicate truths which he had received by immediate revelation from above, and of which the Apostles were ignorant. He supposes them to have been revealed by Christ to Peter, James, and John, at the time of the Transfiguration, and to Paul at a subsequent period; and to have been by them orally transmitted to their successors in the superintendence of the Church. When, however, we come to inquire into the nature of this sublime knowledge, we find

that it consisted of subtle explanations of the doctrine of the Trinity and of other Christian doctrines; of allegorical and mystical interpretations of Scripture; of moral precepts not widely differing from those, the observance of which was enjoined by Montanus, though carried to a less degree of extravagance. . . . Both the philosophy and the religion of the Gentile world had their external and internal doctrines, and from them in an evil hour the distinction was introduced into the Church of Christ. Clemens Alexandrinus is the earliest Christian writer in whose works any allusion to it appears; and we say that he introduced the distinction in an evil hour, because on it, and on the account which he gives of its origin, are founded the two principal arguments urged by Roman Catholics in defence of their doctrinal and other corruptions. When driven from every other point, they fly, as to a last refuge, to the *disciplina arcani* and to oral tradition; and though the writings of Clemens afford no countenance whatever to the particular errors which the Romish Church is anxious to maintain, yet it derives no small advantage to its cause from the statement of so early a writer—that Christ communicated important truths to the Apostles, which were neither intended for the ear, nor adapted to the comprehension of the great body of believers, and which had come down to his own time through the medium of oral tradition."

Such is the *disciplina arcani*, and we refer to it and point out its nature only for the sake of explaining that what we are about to describe as the system of the early Church, is not any such esoteric system as taught to a distinct class of believers, but simply such a recognition that there is a difference between unbelievers and believers as was made, first by our Lord, and afterwards by His chosen Apostles.

In the primitive Church the inability of the unregenerate to "see the Kingdom of God" was so clearly recognized that even Catechumens, or those who were prepared to accept the Christian religion and were in training for admission to the Church, were regarded as inadmissible to the knowledge of any but the more elementary truths. A passage in Clement of

Alexandria,—"milk is catechetical instruction, being as it were the first nourishment of the soul: meat is the full contemplation of the mysteries (ἡ ἐποπτικὴ θεωεία). The *carnal* were they who had been recently admitted to catechetical instruction, the babes in Christ,"—indicates clearly the view which was taken in his time, and we shall endeavour to sketch the main features of the system which was afterwards developed out of these principles. It will be borne in mind, however, that our subject is the education of avowed unbelievers—of persons not yet brought, but of whom it is hoped that they may be brought, to be Catechumens,—and therefore the inferences which should be drawn are of an *a fortiori* nature. The primitive Church, to which we are wont to refer as a model of purity, wisdom, simplicity, zeal, reality, and which at any rate did succeed in converting the great empire of Rome, acted on certain principles, and in a way which we are now to show, in doing its work as a converter, putting truth as they could bear it before men who asked to be admitted to the Church: *a fortiori* truth must be shown with a certain prudent reticence and graduation to those who avowedly are standing far off and are opposed to Christ. We give below the main authorities on which our sketch is based, and when we can do so with advantage, we shall use the words of the authors without mentioning in every case the special source from which they are drawn.[1]

The Church as a whole was regarded as divided into three great classes—"Rulers or guides, and two of those who are subject to them: for the people are divided into two classes; the believers, and the unbaptized, *i.e.* the Catechumens." (Eusebius.) Catechumens were regarded as so far within the kingdom that they were "candidates of heaven."

[1] Bingham's *Antiquities*, vol. i., book i., chap. 4; vol. iii., book x., chaps. 1, 2, 5; vol. iv., book xiv., chap. 5; Cave's *Primitive Christianity*, part i., chap. 8; St. Cyril, *Library of the Fathers;* Bishop Kaye's *Clement*, pp. 444-445; Bishop Kaye's *Tertullian*, pp. 232-235.

The faithful, or baptized, were regarded as gifted by regeneration with a new *nature*—the gift of the Spirit seminally imparting new *capacities* to every part of them, to body, to soul, to intellect—and were called "the Illuminate," because enlightened with the heavenly gift Heb. vi., 4; x. 32), or as Justin Martyr says, "Because their understandings were enlightened by the knowledge that was consequent to baptism. For all the mysteries of religion were unveiled to the baptized:" also "the Initiated," that is "admitted to the use of the sacred offices, and knowledge of the sacred mysteries of the Christian religion," while the Catechumens were called uninitiated: also "the Perfect," "because as consummate Christians" they were admitted to the τὸ τέλειον, as ancient Councils called the Holy Eucharist.

The special privileges of the faithful as compared with the Catechumens were as follows:—(1) They were allowed to take part in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, whereas the Catechumens at that portion of the service when the celebration properly began were dismissed by the deacons, who said: "Holy things for holy men; ye Catechumens, go forth." (2) They were allowed to join in all the prayers. The prayers after the sermon, but before the Communion office, were prayers offered *on behalf of* various classes of persons who were prayed for, among the rest for the Catechumens, and at these the higher classes of Catechumens might be present. The prayers offered by men *as* Christians,—the real worship of the Church—were those of the Communion office, and in these none but the faithful partook. (3) In particular they were allowed to use the Lord's Prayer, which was called "the prayer of the faithful." St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, Theodoret, and many others expressly state that this was especially the prayer of the regenerate, and that the Catechumens, as unregenerate, were not allowed to pray to God as "our Father." (4) They were allowed to be present at the discourses which treated of the mysteries of the Christian religion. The Catechu-

mens and even the unbelievers were allowed to be present during the reading of Holy Scripture and at the popular discourses, for in these they alluded to deeper things only in such a way as was unintelligible to the uninitiated, but the faithful alone could bear "the mysteries of the kingdom."

Upon this last point we must say more, and first we may describe the distinction generally, afterwards the treatment of Catechumens more particularly. St. Basil (370 A.D.) distinguishes between the things which could be publicly and generally proclaimed, and the dogmas, or more sublime and hidden doctrines and parts of the Christian faith, which were not to be divulged commonly, but to be locked up in silence. "Of this nature," says Cave, "were the doctrines of the Trinity and hypostatic union, and such like; especially the two sacraments. For though they acquainted their young hearers with so much of them as was necessary to stir up their desires, yet as to the main of the things themselves, the sacramental symbols, the manner of their celebration, the modus of the Divine Presence in the Holy Eucharist, &c., these were carefully concealed both from strangers and Catechumens." . . . Hence that ancient form so common in the writings and sermons of the Fathers, whereby when accidentally discoursing before the people of any of those mysterious parts of religion, they used to fetch themselves off with, "Those that are initiated know what is said." This was so usual that this phrase occurs at least fifty times in the writings of St. Chrysostom. St. Ambrose, whose sermons had their share in the conversion of St. Augustine, describes his own ordinary sermons to the unbaptized as only "de moralibus," and founded on the acts of the Patriarchs, or the Proverbs, in order that those who had learnt to follow the conduct of the ancients and to obey the oracles of God might come to baptism, and receiving that live as becomes the cleansed. Then would be his time to speak of mysteries and unfold the meaning of the sacraments. To do

so sooner would be more like betraying the mysteries than explaining them. St. Augustine himself, addressing some who had been newly baptized, says: "Having now dismissed the Catechumens, we have retained only you to be our hearers: because beside those things which belong to Christians in common we are now to discourse of the heavenly mysteries which none are qualified to hear but such as by God's gift are made partakers of them. And therefore ye ought to hear them with the greater reverence, by how much more sublime those doctrines are which are committed only to the baptized and believing auditors than those which the Catechumens also are accustomed to hear." Theodoret says, in language which reminds us of our Lord's sayings about parables, "We discoursed obscurely of Divine mysteries before the uninitiated: but when they are departed, we speak plainly to the initiated."

More particularly. The Catechumens were divided into four classes. First and lowest, those who were privately instructed out of church. The second, "the hearers," who were admitted to hear the ordinary sermons and the Holy Scriptures, but not to take part in *any* prayers. The third, "the kneelers," who were present during the prayers offered for themselves and certain other classes before the celebration. The fourth, "the Elect," who had asked for baptism and been chosen by the Bishop as fit to receive it. How far the graduation in teaching corresponded with this classification does not appear, but the teaching also was graduated. Bishop Kaye tells us, as he learns from Tertullian—who, by the way, brings as a charge against the heretics that "among them no distinction is made between the Catechumen and the faithful or confirmed Christian; . . . all hear, all pray together,"—"that the teachers . . . appear to have followed the course pointed out by the Baptist and our blessed Lord. They began by insisting on the necessity of repentance and amendment of life. . . . The teacher would at the same time gradually unfold the great

truths which constitute the *objects* of a Christian faith; suiting his instruction to the comprehension and previous acquirements of the proselyte, and proceeding from the simpler to the more sublime and mysterious doctrines of the Gospel. Of some the communication was postponed until the convert had been baptized. . . . But after that rite was conferred there was no further reserve; and the whole council of God was declared alike to all the faithful." Bingham, writing to the same effect, says further, that they were taught the nature and use of baptism, how they were to renounce the devil, and enter into covenant with God: besides, an explanation of the Creed, the nature of the soul, and an account of the Canonical Scriptures. In the apostolical constitutions a complete course of instruction is given, and in the catechetical lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, addressed to those who were on the eve of baptism, we see a specimen of the final preparation. The first eighteen of these, addressed to candidates for baptism, answer very much to the course described by Bingham. Five follow "concerning the sacred mysteries," and were addressed to the same persons when baptized. Besides these is an introduction which contains this passage: "Should a Catechumen (one in a lower stage) ask what the teachers have said, tell nothing to a stranger: . . . Let no man say to thee, What harm if I also know it? So the sick ask for wine; but if it be unseasonably given them, it occasions delirium. Thus it is with the Catechumen also if he should hear from the believer. The Catechumen is made delirious, for not understanding what he has heard, he finds fault with it, and scoffs at it." A note is appended to this lecture "to the reader." "These catechetical lectures thou mayest put into the hands of candidates for baptism and of baptized believers, but by no means of Catechumens, nor of any others who are not Christians; as thou shalt answer to the Lord."

In this sketch we have been obliged to omit a summary of

St. Augustine's catechetical treatise, but we may quote Archdeacon Grant's brief account of it. "In dealing with an uninstructed heathen, the external facts, both of God's providence and grace are dwelt upon; a summary of the Creed, as detailing our blessed Lord's history, is intermixed with the argument; the idea of the Church, the city of God, is brought out as the visible witness of God's having visited the earth. Hence proceeds the whole course of exhortation to godliness. With regard to the Holy Scriptures, Catechumens were encouraged to read them, but particularly the moral and historical writings and the apocryphal books, because of their moral characteristics."

The announcement of the doctrines of the Trinity and of the hypostatic union, as well as the learning of the actual words both of the Creed and of the Lord's Prayer, were reserved for the very eve of baptism, though the substance of these must have been known long before. "Now learn the Lord's Prayer," said St. Augustine, "which ye must repeat eight days hence when ye are to be baptized." And there is an equally explicit statement of St. Jerome regarding the doctrines and the Creed.

The reasons for this system as a whole were—(1) "The nature of the mysteries themselves, so sublime and remote from vulgar apprehensions, that they would signify little to pagans or Catechumens not yet fully instructed and confirmed in the faith, and would either be lost upon them, or in danger to be derided by them. (2) That hereby the Catechumens and younger Christians might be inflamed with greater eagerness of desire to partake of the mysteries and privileges of the faithful; human nature being desirous of nothing more than the knowledge of what is concealed from us. (3) To beget in men's minds the higher esteem and veneration for these religious mysteries, nothing producing a greater contempt, even in sacred things, than too great openness and familiarity." (Cave.)

It was not our intention to have gone beyond the primitive Church, but our sketch will be somewhat more complete if we add one or two notices of the methods of those who converted the barbarians of mediæval times. "We have," says Mr. Turner, in his history of the Anglo-Saxons,[1] "an intimation of the plan of instruction which the missionaries adopted for the change of the Pagan mind, in the following judicious directions of Alcuin for a progressive information :—

"This order should be pursued in teaching mature persons : first, they should be instructed in the immortality of the soul ; in the future life ; in its retribution of good and evil ; and in the eternal duration of both conditions.

"Second. They should then be informed for what sins and crimes they will have to suffer with the devil everlasting punishment ; and for what good and beneficial deeds they will enjoy unceasing glory with Christ.

"Third. The faith of the Holy Trinity is then to be most diligently taught ; and the coming of our Saviour into the world for the salvation of the human race. Afterwards impress the mystery of His passion ; the truth of His resurrection ; His glorious Ascension ; His future advent to judge all nations ; and the resurrection of our bodies.

"Thus prepared and strengthened, the man may be baptized."

Further particulars regarding Alcuin's teaching will be found in Neander. (3) Some good hints as to the mode of dealing with idolaters are given by Daniel of Winchester to the converter of Germany :[2] "He was not to begin at once with refuting the idolatrous notions of the pagans ; but in the way of interrogation, in which he ought to show his own thorough knowledge of their system, he was to lead them on to discover for themselves the self-contradiction it involved, and the absurd consequences it led to ; all without ridiculing or exciting them,

[1] Grant's *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 406, 407.
[2] Neander, vol., sec. I.

but rather with gentleness and moderation. Then he should occasionally introduce here and there scraps of Christian doctrine, comparing it with their superstitions, so that they might rather be shamed than excited to anger." In Mr. Maclear's book on mediæval missions further information, if we remember right, may be gathered upon these topics, but we are not now able to refer to it.

LETTER VI.

The six principles which have been established—Objections stated and replied to—Bishop Cotterill's Genesis of the Church—The influence of the Holy Spirit.

We have travelled over a considerable space, beginning with the teaching of our Lord, and ending with that of the Missionaries who converted the barbarians of Europe. Indeed, our range has been even wider, for we hinted, and may here distinctly say, that Judaism was a great school, and the law, as St. Paul called it, the slave which led the Jewish world by figures to Christ. But now let us pause for a little to review the ground over which we have travelled, and to gather up our conclusions. The educational principles which we have established seem to us as follows:

1. That a knowledge of divine things must be acquired gradually, and that the highest kind of knowledge, "the whole truth" as our Lord called it (*πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν*) can be learnt only by the possession of "the Spirit of truth" (*τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας*), as the mind of God, sanctifying and enlightening the mind of man.

2. That Divine truth must be taught either in figure or "plainly" (*παρρησίᾳ*); and that the figurative form is the form which is suited for those who are learning rudiments, the plain, that which follows when those who have acquired the elements are able to go on to fulness of knowledge.

3. That the figurative method consists essentially in showing

forth our Lord's Human Nature as the manifestation of the Son's Godhead, or, to put the matter in its most general form, in leading men to the spiritual through the natural.

4. That the faculties of human nature to which primarily appeal is made in rudimentary teaching are the imagination and the heart, and only secondarily the intellect. In the higher teaching the intellect is brought into full prominence, because the Spirit, as the "mind of Christ," and the searcher of "the deep things of God," enlightens the reason of man; but in the earlier stage reason, though not altogether quiescent, yet is subordinate, and follows imagination, whereas afterwards it leads, while itself is guided into truth by the Spirit. ἐπίγνωσις, or fulness of knowledge, is the gift of the Spirit.

5. That the moral nature, of which conscience is the voice, must move parallel with imagination and reason in the education of the soul, or rather must move just in front of these faculties, repentance or conversion of heart being the first step in knowledge, and growth in goodness ever preceding growing knowledge.

6. That persons not yet baptized for the remission of sins and reception of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 38) are not to be regarded as Christians in the full meaning of the term, and ought not, *e.g.* to be associated in prayer with the faithful; their condition being such that they are rather to be prayed for by the faithful, than to pray along with them. This at any rate was the rule and the practice of the Primitive Church.

These principles, as it seems to us, have either been clearly established by the historical sketch which has been given, most of them by the authority of our Lord Himself, or are evidently to be deduced from that which has been exemplified.

But looking at these principles we see in them matters which require more full elucidation, and in connection with them certain difficult questions may not unnaturally be asked which require an answer. For instance, it may be said:—If the early Church was right in teaching the Creed to Catechumens, and

if the Apostles are our models in preaching to the world the substance of its articles, and in so doing the early Church and the Apostles taught only rudimentary truth, what is full truth? Again: If the doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God is the all-inclusive rudimentary lesson, must not those who can learn this possess the Spirit, since "no man can confess that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost"? Again, men may ask, of what exact nature is the difference, as to powers of apprehension, between a man before Regeneration and Confirmation, and the same man after? and yet again, in connection with this last, what is the exact difference in the respective natures of the truths which are to be learnt, between the rudimentary truths which can be learnt without the gift of the Spirit, and the perfect truth which the Spirit reveals?

The questions thus indicated are of great importance, and if we attempt to apply our principles without that further elucidation which these questions suggest as necessary, confusion of thought may arise, and the views which we desire to maintain may be misapprehended. Delicate, therefore, and difficult as may be some of the topics which are thus started, we must endeavour to answer these questions, and thus more fully to explain our principles.

In answer to the first we have found a passage so exactly to the point in a new book which we have just met with—Bishop Cotterill's Genesis of the Church—that we give it as an expression of our own view. We give the passage entire, though other questions not now before us are referred to in it:—

"It is evident that Jesus Christ's own words define the One Faith as that which is contained in the Divine Name into which men are to be baptized. The faith involved in that Name being necessary to baptism, is therefore required for admission into the one body, which is thus limited and determined. But it will be remembered that this one Faith was from time to time expressed in different forms. In the confession of St. Peter, which Christ Himself declared to be the

fundamental faith of His Church, it was expressed in the words, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' In the preaching of the Apostles it appears as 'Jesus and the resurrection.' St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians expounds it as being, 'that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again, according to the Scriptures.' St. John in his Epistles sums it up in the words 'Jesus is the Christ' or 'Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.' Now in all these it is evident, first, that in each the baptismal faith is virtually implied, and then that not one is more than such an expansion or explanation of this faith as may be necessary in order to enable men truly to receive it. But it may be asked, since all true knowledge of the Son of God must be an outgrowth from the one fundamental faith, how are we to distinguish between the one faith and that knowledge which is derived from it? The attempt to distinguish between fundamentals and non-fundamentals, if by the one is intended what is necessary to be believed, and by the other what is indifferent—is evidently a vain and fruitless task; for everything is necessary to be believed which we learn through the teaching of the Spirit. But if we mean by fundamentals, those foundation or root truths out of which Christian doctrine is to be evolved, there is no such difficulty. For we must exclude from those all mere inferences or deductions, but must include in them both the facts involved in this truth, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and such explanations as are required for its complete exposition. The explanations however must be only those which we learn from divine revelation. Because no truths lying out of the reach of the human understanding can receive any such explanation as can be an article of faith, from the conclusions of the understanding. We are assured that the form in which such truth is presented to our mind by the Spirit of God Himself is a legitimate symbol and expression of this truth; but when any addition is made to this by the human understanding, with the view of making it more intelligible, we have no assurance that it is any explanation at all.

"Nor indeed, if an explanation were deducible from Holy Scripture itself, could we at once conclude that it ought to be a part of the elementary faith, 'the word of the beginning of

Christ,' the 'teaching of baptism and of laying on of hands,' intended for the children of the kingdom. The process through which the developed knowledge of the Son of God is attained requires, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, spiritual perceptions which have been quickened and strengthened by use. The one faith must be 'the sincere milk of the word,' and not strong meat for them who are of full age.

"We conclude then that for the 'One Faith' it is essential:—

First. That every article in it should be merely the expansion of the faith contained in 'the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost;' or in other words, 'in Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God.'

"Secondly. That every article should be a root truth, that is, one out of which other truths may be developed.

"Thirdly. That every article should be an expansion of the faith, not made by human reasoning, but expressly revealed, that is, contained in Holy Scripture.

"Fourthly. Every article must be an elementary truth, and not one of those for which a cultivated and matured knowledge is necessary."

Our answer then, thus stated fully, briefly is, that the doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God is really the same as the Creed, the Creed being not so much a development as a full statement of it, a statement of all which must be held in order that *it* may be held. We may add, what we believe is also true, that the Creed is to be regarded as a statement of Christian *facts* rather than of Christian *notions*.

As to the second question, when St. Peter made his memorable confession he was told that flesh and blood had not revealed the doctrine of our Lord's Godhead to him, but the Father, and the Father, no doubt, made this revelation by the Holy Ghost. Yet St. Peter was one of those to whom our Lord said that they could not bear to know higher truth until the Spirit had been sent, and had been given to them. Evidently, therefore, we must distinguish between such an influence of the Spirit as may be exerted on those who are entering into truth and coming to faith, and such an influence as that

which the Spirit exerts on those who, through faith in Jesus as the Son of God, have been regenerated in Baptism, and made freemen of the city and kingdom of God. It is this last influence and mode of presence which is the differentia of a Christian, and which makes the least in the Kingdom of Heaven greater even than John the Baptist, who as the Forerunner of the Kingdom was greater than all before born of woman. The Spirit of God, we may believe, exerts some influence on all men, exerted a higher influence on good Jews as having the oracles of God, exerts always an influence higher still on those who are being drawn to Christ by growing faith, but these influences are all far lower, and differ in kind from those which He exerts on the members of the Kingdom. To these He is personally present. In these He personally dwells. These by Him are united with Christ, and are, in no mere figure of speech, sons of God and heirs of Heaven. Of these St. Paul says—in words which must be taken in the fulness of their meaning—" we have *the mind* of Christ."

The remaining questions may perhaps best be treated in connection with each other. May we not then say in answer to these, that there was a revelation of truth by the Holy Spirit, as well as by the Son? Our Lord said that He had many things to say that the disciples could not bear, and which therefore *He* would not say ; but what He would not say His Spirit would lead them into. This is certainly a declaration that the Spirit would be a revealer of truth, and of truth in its fulness, "all the truth ;" that is to say, of higher truth than our Lord revealed. We should err, however, if we supposed that this was different truth, except in so far as developed truth differs from seminal or radical truth. Our Lord as the manifested Word of God is the sole outward revealer, and, therefore, while the Spirit was revealer, and a revealer of additional and new truth, the novelty consisted in development, not in the disclosure of new germs and roots. In short, the doctrine that the man Jesus is the Son of God, involving as

this does the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, is along with the doctrine of the Trinity universal truth—I AM THE TRUTH—and what the Holy Spirit did, as a revealer, was inwardly to unfold this germ within the minds of the Apostles, and then to guide them, by what we call inspiration, when they outwardly recorded this in those writings which the Church has treated as canonical.

The nature of this work is thus described by our Lord. "He shall guide you into all truth." "He shall bring all things to your remembrances, whatsoever I have said unto you." He was not to speak as an original teacher, but as carrying out what another had said: "He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." That is, the Apostles had the truth. It was around them, expressed in our Lord's words; in a certain way it was in them, but it was not deep within them, and, so to say, they did not know their way as they moved in the midst of it. But the Spirit, knowing and understanding it fully, would go before them and show them their way amid its intricacies, and throw light on what was dark in it; going down, as if into a mine, into the deeps of truth and the deeps of their own minds, and carrying a light with Him which He would throw upon the precious ore as it lay there. Christ had told them everything, but the Spirit would bring up Christ's sayings to their memory, and help them to look at those exhaustless words, till all that was in them, little by little, came out into clearness, and till their minds, partly by intuition, partly by inference, saw more and more of that infinity which they contained. On this, however, we can only further say, that while this work was done by the Spirit towards the Apostles, in a special way, because they were not only Christians and Apostles, but authorized and inspired revealers, the same work in kind is done in every good Christian. In all who have the Spirit and follow Him, there is the same development of the germs of truth, the same guiding, the same bringing to remembrance.

As to the doctrines themselves thus revealed by the Spirit, first to the Apostles, that they might proclaim them with an authority which is Divine, and still to us, as men "go on from the principles of the doctrine of Christ to perfection, and as men advance in the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge (ἐπιγνώσεως) of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," we can but briefly describe them as consisting of all those truths which the Apostles evolve in their writings out of the Divinity of the Son of man, and their applications of those truths to the conduct and life of men; the doctrines of justification and sanctification, the doctrines of atonement and propitiation, the grace of the sacraments as means of union with a living Christ, the Church as the body of Christ and the fulness of Him who fills all in all; the nature, in fact, of the life of God in man, in its origin, its manifestation, its growth, its end. And one remark may be added. Each of the two classes of truth, the rudimentary and the higher, is grouped around a sacrament as its centre. "As the ordinance of baptism," says one whom we have lately quoted, "was that round which the first principles of Christian doctrine and discipline were to be gathered, so would the other sacrament of the gospel be the central point, not only of the practical life of the Christian, but also of all those mysteries of godliness," the wisdom of them that are perfect, "which are necessary for the growth and the maturity of the Christian life."

And now it will be evident what faculty of our nature is chiefly engaged in this acquisition of the higher knowledge. The Holy Spirit's seat is in the reason of man, which He enlightens, so that it shall both intuitively see the deeps of truth itself, and shall throw light on the inferential processes of the understanding as it reduces the truths which reason gives it into its own forms. Of such enlightenment of the reason as enables us to see the deep things of God by intuition St. John's mind is the highest example, and St. Paul not less signally

illustrates the inferential and logical processes of the understanding, when it shines with the light of reason, which is illuminated by the Spirit of God.

These explanatory statements are sufficient, we hope, to show what is involved in our principles, and now we are in a position to apply these principles to the methods which are used among ourselves in educating unbelievers.

LETTER VII.

The system generally adopted in Mission Schools in India—To which there are exceptions—The system criticized in no hostile spirit—Mission Schools a characteristic of modern Missions—Education used as the chief instrument for conversion—The efforts of Missionaries to educate have been followed by Government—Spread of general intelligence, of which the Church may avail herself—Might not Missionary Societies now reserve their funds and their agents for the cultivation of their converts?—The existing system of Mission Schools described—Their general inefficiency in gaining converts—Contrast between the principles of such schools and the system of our Lord and His Apostles, and of the early Church—Statement of five principles deduced from the argument.

HAVING ascertained, as we believe, the principles which are applicable to the question before us, we are now to apply them, and to state what we regard as mistaken and erroneous in the educational system of Mission schools, as carried on in India. That system, of course, has its varieties, and we do not mean to imply that every school is chargeable with the supposed faults which we are to point out, but there is a general system so widely spread that we may characterize it as the ordinary system, followed in missions both of the Church and of bodies external to us; and it is to this ordinary system that our criticisms are addressed. Our criticisms, as we have already stated, are offered in a friendly spirit, and with a single desire to promote that object which missionaries in general have at heart. Our sole object is to help, in however small a way, that great work which now is moving as if with wheels which drag heavily through the impediments which hinder their

progress. If we can drop a little oil upon the axles, we shall be satisfied; and if, in trying to do so, we should ourselves make mistakes, and suggest things which will not tend to remove the impediments, we shall not be unwilling to admit our errors, or quarrel with the sound reasoning which points them out.

Mission schools, then, are the chief characteristic of what we may call Protestant Missions. Education during this century has been a prominent feature in the work of all religious associations in Great Britain; and education has been used in India as the chief instrument of conversion. As, too, Scotland has been distinguished ever since the Reformation for the efforts which the Kirk has made to spread education among the poorer classes, so in India Scottish Missions have espoused the cause of education among the heathen with especial earnestness, and, under the influence of men so deservedly esteemed as Dr. Duff and Dr. Wilson, have taken a very decided lead in this kind of work. How far this work has been a good one we cannot now stop to consider, we can only now give it as our own opinion that in being so forward in educating the masses of the people, missions have inaugurated a movement which, by producing general intelligence, has laid the foundation which the Church of Christ asks for in order that it may build up its own edifice. The kingdom of God is a reasonable kingdom, and not only does not fear true intelligence, but at once creates it and flourishes where it is found. Now however, when the lead of the missions has been followed by Government, and schools are spreading rapidly into every town and village, the time, we think, has come when the missionary bodies may do well to reserve both their funds and their men for the cultivation of their converts, and to spend their chief energies on the sanctification of the intelligence which is being otherwise diffused.

But, however this may be, the system of Mission schools may be thus described. Christians and unbelievers are mixed

together, no difference being made between them. The school is opened with prayer through Christ to God as a Father, in which Christians and unbelievers, at least outwardly, take a common part: religious lessons are given founded on Holy Scripture, during which Christians and unbelievers stand according to their places in the class, and are taught in all respects together. What and how far they read is a matter dependent only on their age and intelligence; if they have intelligence to follow his reasoning, the Epistles of St. Paul, treating as they do the profounder mysteries of religion and the special privileges of a Christian, are studied and analysed, hymns and Christian poetry, expressing the devouter thoughts and even the rapturous emotions of a true believer, are learnt, and even sung, by young persons who pass from this atmosphere of piety to homes in which the Divinity of the Son of God is rejected with Mahomedan abhorrence, and the abominations of idolatry scatter their pestilential influence on all around. We have heard "Oh that will be joyful" sung in the vernacular, and the first chapter of St. John's Gospel read, by elderly girls, most of whom were married already to heathen husbands, and of whom it was absolutely certain that their life would be spent amid idolatrous customs and observances, without a chance of deliverance from them, even if deliverance was desired. And all this is *compulsory*. In all but an insignificant minority of the pupils there is an active enmity to Christian truth, an enmity derived from inherited corruption, and fostered by the stimulating influences of false beliefs and moral pollutions; but the school is sought for the secular advantages which it provides at a cheap rate, and the religious instruction is tolerated, because neither parents nor children have any fear of its effects, and because the missionary, as a good man, is kind and zealous for the instruction of the children, and teaches so well that English tongue which is the high road to public and other high employment. As to the view taken by the promoters of the schools, they seem to think

that if young people can be treated as if they were Christians, and made to act as Christians—reading the Bible, praying, singing, learning Christian hymns and poems—there is a hope that they will become Christians. And, sometimes, an intellectual readiness in acquiring knowledge about Christianity seems to be accepted as if it was an actual faith in Christ. "These boys," said an active missionary to one whom we know, after examining a class of Hindoos and Mahomedans in the case of the sons of Sceva the Jew:—"These boys are all Christians." "Have they been baptised?" "Oh no." But these boys no doubt are still Hindoos and Mahomedans, and will, in all probability, continue to be Hindoos and Mahomedans until their dying day. We have heard of persons who, being unable to understand Euclid, and being compelled to pass an examination in it, set to work to learn Euclid by heart, and succeeded in passing a written examination which did not test their real perception of what they learnt. It seems to us as if the Christianity thus achieved by rote is in almost every case of this parrot nature, and when one looks at the poor lads in a Mission school, and sees how far their wills, and their hearts, and their consciences are removed from the knowledge which they so glibly utter, one wonders if they are not really harmed by this habituation to the sound of awful realities, which they thus are accustomed to deposit in their intellects without any thought that they are to tell upon their lives. If we add, as an instance of the length to which men carry this system of making young people Christians by compelling them to *say* Christian truths, that Mahomedan boys are taught, in answer to the question "Who was Jesus Christ?" to say "The Son of God;" and that in many schools the teaching of religion in English has been put a stop to, because the boys persisted in making the Bible lesson a lesson in grammar and English by irrepressible questions, we have said all that space allows upon the system as it now exists. As to the effect of it, it is notorious that it is inefficient, as might, we think, have been expected.

In one large school, numbering usually nearly three hundred boys, which has been carried on for many years at a vast expenditure of hard-raised missionary money, and with the occupation of the full energies of two or three European missionaries, besides native assistants, the result, as we know, has been literally or practically nothing, and such is nearly the result of the system as a whole. We do not say that it has made no converts, for contact with good men will lead to some result under any system; but many who are competent judges, and many missionaries, are reluctantly despairing of success through it, and are asking if labour on missions so zealous as has been much of that which has been spent on education, need be thus in vain.

But we must be more particular. The contrast between this system and the educational principles of our Lord, of the Apostles, of the primitive and early mediæval Church, must, as we have sketched those principles, be obvious on the most cursory inspection, and we must now indicate the points of contrast more distinctly.

1. It is, we think, a serious mistake to mix together believers and unbelievers during religious instruction, and to pray with unbelievers as if, in unbelief, they could approach God as Christians do. Such mixture lowers the standing of a Christian in the eyes of both. One whom God regards as greater than John the Baptist is made to feel, and is treated before unbelievers as being, on the same level, in the sight of God, as a Mahomedan who blasphemes Christ, and an idolator who worships stones. As men they are equal, as religious men they are wide as infinity asunder, and the difference should be made broadly yet charitably visible. If, too, we go to the bottom of the matter and ask for the reason that no difference is made, must we not find it in an inadequate perception of the greatness of regeneration? If regeneration is the same as conversion, only a change in the affections of the heart, this mixture is intelligible, for between a believer and unbeliever there is a

difference only in disposition. If, however, regeneration is a change of *nature*,—the seminal beginning of a literal *re-creation*, an ingrafting into and union with the second Adam, the Lord from heaven,—the difference between "the least in the Kingdom of God" and an unbeliever is as great as between the human natures of Adam and Christ. So that really, though doubtless unintentionally, a child of God and a member of Christ is treated as if this high relationship was a thing of *figure*, and not a thing of fact.

2. It is not less a mistake, as we conceive, to teach unbelievers as if they could receive truth as Christian children can. All right education of Christians is based on the fact that they are children of God through union with God's Son. They have in them the seed of God, latent it may be, even covered and choked with weeds it may be also, yet there, and needing only culture to educe it; and the Christian teacher waters and tills genuine soil. Not, indeed, always with success, because the will after all may be wanting, and without a good will in the soul toil will be in vain. In the unbeliever, on the other hand, there is Adam's fallen nature and nothing else; not the seed which can be educed, not the soil which can be fertile, not the essential will. If by God's special leading there arise yearnings and drawings truthwards, something can be made of these. But the method of cultivation must be as different as the seed and the soil, and to confound the two is to work in blindness and confusion. What, however, is the practice under what we call the educational system? The unbeliever is taught just as if he was a Christian. When he has read the Gospels and the Acts, it is simply a question of intelligence and general acumen whether he goes on to the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians, with all their mysteries and glories, or not. The books too of the "Christian Vernacular Education Society" are composed on the same principles. In the Primitive Church, the creeds, the doctrines of the hypostatic union and of the Trinity were withheld, even from

the "candidates of heaven," until they were on the point of being illuminated and of tasting the heavenly gift. In these books, along with much which is suitable, there is mingled an attempt to set forth, for the instruction of unbelievers, not only the moral principles of Christianity—St. Ambrose's "*de moralibus*"—and the root-truths which are the proper limit of catechetical instruction; but those notional and developed truths connected with justification, sanctification, and atonement, which the Spirit alone can unfold to the sanctified understanding; while Christian poems and hymns are taught to, perhaps sung by, worshippers of Shiva with the mark of that vile god daubed upon their foreheads. Now this appears to us, if anything can be, a casting of pearls before swine. It is a making truth dirt cheap. It is an accustoming the unbeliever to that familiarity with unwelcome truth which proverbially produces contempt for it. This is what we referred to when we spoke of giving truth like medicine by force to reluctant minds. This is what appears to us a treating spiritual truth as if it could be intellectually discerned. How are the developed truths of the Atonement, or of the Epistle to the Romans, to be received by unbelieving minds except by mere natural intellect? What other faculty for apprehending them do they possess? If they are not "the natural man" of St. Paul, who are? And if they have spiritual discernment, who have not?

3. Moreover the system, as a whole, as interpreted by the books above referred to, appears to aim at producing at once the full work of the Spirit in the heart, at rousing the Christian emotions even in those who have not professed Christianity, and, as one has expressed it, at creating "an *experience* rather than an *acceptance* of the truth, a *desire*, rather than a *purpose of the will* to obey." This, according to the principles which we have laid down, is to begin at the very end. We say: Arouse imagination; stir the conscience; produce faith in Christ; bring men to the Kingdom of God for illumination;

when enlightened teach them to meditate on truth and develop it by the aid of the Spirit of God personally inhabiting them; thus they will come to feel the emotions of a Christian. The educational system, on the other hand, instead of waiting for the slow processes of wisdom, would devour Metis, and then bring full-grown Minervas out of the mere intellects of unbelieving Jupiters, making the later products of faith the beginnings of conversion.

But we have other objections, and they are the strongest of all.

4. A habit of *treating* unbelievers as if they were believers, and making them say what Christians believe as if they themselves believed it, of trying to form, so to say, an *intellectual* habit of Christianity in separation from a morally and spiritually Christian condition, is really, however unintentionally on the part of the teachers, to form a habit of intellectual dishonesty which radically injures the character and deeply averts the person as a whole from truth.

5. Also, this treating of unbelievers as if they, in their state of unbelief, could approach God and learn His truth, is, we are convinced, to place Christianity on a basis of nature and reason, not of mediation and revelation. To say to unbelievers, "Pray to God as your Father, believe in Him, when you die trust in Him and commit your soul to Him," as these books, interpreting the system of conversion by intellectual education, say, and that without supposing an outward profession, or the use of any one of the mediatorial ordinances provided by Christ, is practically to say: "You as men—not as men new born and quickened by Christ, but as men in a natural condition—may come to God." Nor is the case altered essentially when it is replied that they are taught to come to God through Christ. For, though that is a witness to the intentions of the teachers, it does not alter the substance of the teaching itself. Principles assert themselves in spite of qualifications. Nature and reason say: "Go to God direct; mind and soul can speak to the Great

Spirit of the universe, and need no human intervention, no ordinance, no man, to come in between the soul and its Creator." Christ says: "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me," and requires outward confession, profession of faith, use of the means of grace which He provided. And to teach men that they may reach God without these things, is to make nature the way to God, however much the teacher in his heart may abhor naturalism.

Such are some of the chief objections which we have to make against the religious education of unbelievers, as now very commonly carried on in India. It is, we think, open to question whether education can be wisely used as a direct means of conversion at all. If it can be, it must be conducted, we believe, in a manner consistent with the principles which we have endeavoured to establish. For the present, however, we content ourselves with stating our objections to the existing system, and with expressing our hope that our criticisms, frank and unreserved as they are, may be received as they are offered, in a spirit of honest zeal to promote the conversion of the people of India.

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Missions in India.

THE

SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

IN

GOVERNMENT AND MISSION SCHOOLS

CONTRASTED

BY

LIEUT.-GEN. C. W. TREMENHEERE, C.B.

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